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ABSTRACT

The Bellevue-in-the-Community-College (BCC) program meets the needs and interests of local businesses, industries, agencies, and clubs through credit and noncredit courses held at times and places convenient to employees and members. The program's primary goal is to provide instruction and training to those who cannot come to the college for their course work because of job demands and family obligations; but the program also serves to heighten the visibility of the college and increase public support. BCC offers five types of services: (1) regular academic course credit leading to a degree; (2) additional courses tailored to meet employees' needs and interests; (3) on-site instruction; (4) qualified instructors; and (5) use of library facilities. The program also offers several important benefits to the college, including continuous updating of course materials and information, information on courses that are useful to business and industry, exchange of personnel, program funding by the corporation, and additional public exposure. In establishing such a program, several preliminary steps should be taken. Potential participants should be identified and contacted; meetings should be arranged for discussing possible courses, schedules, facilities, and costs; and a follow-up letter should confirm the parties' expectations. At Bellevue the use of these procedures has resulted in cooperative arrangements with 11 businesses and the instruction of an additional 1,066 students in one year. (KL)

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AN APPROACH TO MARKETING VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

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AN APPROACH TO MARKETING VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

More and more the community college is living up to its name. The handshake between the community and the college is ever-tightening as the community becomes more and more aware of the college's efforts to involve itself in joint programs and projects. Local residents participate in continuing education courses, attend college-based seminars and workshops, subscribe to lecture and artist's series, go to college-produced plays and concerts, and bring their children to child care centers while they attend regular credit classes. However, we truly serve our communities if we encourage innovative programs to meet the need and convenience of the total community. At Bellevue Community College we are attempting to do just that.

THE NEED

The Washington State Commmunity College Act of 1967 specifically states that, as well as offering "comprehensive educational training and service programs to meet the needs of both the communities and students," the colleges offer "realistic and practical courses in occupational education . . . and community services of an educational, cultural and recreational nature." For years we have taught basic education courses such as English and history, as well as folk dancing and interior decorating, on-site, at local high schools. However, we have never really extended this service to the community as a whole. That is what "Bellevue-in-the-Community-College" is all about, and we are currently meeting the interests and needs of local businesses, industries, agencies and clubs and endeavoring to provide them with both credit and noncredit classes, held at their

location, at hours convenient to their employees and members. In addition, we are able to tailor the courses, through contract offerings, to the specific requirements of the various organizations and corporations.

This idea is not new. Nothing, perhaps, ever is, but the scope is broader and the emphasis stronger than it has been in the past. What we at BCC are suggesting is that there is a large, untapped resource in the community which, because it cannot or will not travel to campus for classes, is receptive to the convenience, and in some cases the more relaxed, non-threatening atmosphere of class participation with their known peers rather than unknown strangers.

It is important, too, that the interests of the college are served as well as the interests of the community. We cannot, for instance, compete with ourselves by offering classes to those who could readily and willingly come to the campus. However, if our educational resources cannot expand and become vital in the maintenance and progress of our communities, they will surely atrophy. It is, then, in the best self-interest of the academic community to provide the educational stimuli to the community and, concomitantly, to solicit support from those groups who most profit from those stimuli. If cooperative educational programs can be established between "the town" and "the gown," perhaps the academic training which the college provides and the necessary enrollments which the organizations and corporations could provide would meet the needs and demands of each.

THE OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of placing the college's resources IN the community is to offer instruction and training to those who cannot come TO the college for their course work. The demands of regular jobs, evening and weekend

obligations to their families often prohibit regular classroom participation. By bringing the college to the community, the visibility of the college, and its obvious interest in serving the needs of the community, could be greatly increased to the enhancement of the college's regular programs, as well as to those in the non-credit areas. Such a project should command a good deal of public support, if the proper public relations' areas are tapped and a sustained effort at interesting the corporate entities in the venture is made. Conferences and seminars could also generate from such a cooperative project. The public is invariably excited by success, and members of the executive staffs of various businesses might be called upon to speak to the community at large. The program, then, is not only created to serve the needs of the corporation but to reach out to the community as a whole and involve it in the opportunities and services available at the local community college.

While the project begins with small scale causes and effects and develops slowly, even the least pretentious strides, if properly focused and publicized broaden both the community's awareness of the college's commitment to its surroundings and the forward motion of its administration.

WHAT THE COLLEGE HAS TO OFFER CORPORATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

I. Regular academic course credit leading to, but not limited to, a degree.

A. Suggested course possibilities:

1. General Office Procedures.
2. General Business.
3. Marketing.
4. Real Estate.
5. Introduction to Computer Programming.

6. Introduction to Law Enforcement.

7. Technical Writing.

8. Communication in Business and Industry.

9. Public Speaking

10. First Aid and Safety.

11. First-Line Supervisor

12. Electronic Soldering.

B. Additional courses can be designed and submitted as practical interests and needs are discerned.

NOTE: Following preliminary discussions with the corporations, perhaps only two or three courses would be offered the first quarter. The above is a mere "possiblity" list.

2. Courses that directly relate to the employee's needs and desires for professional or personal advancement.

3. In-house (on-site) instruction; time and place to be determined by the schedules and practicalities of the corporations.

4. Instruction by those who regularly (even if part-time) teach the courses on campus, or qualified off-campus equivalents.

5. Library facilities as desired (not required) by the employee/student.

<u>WHAT THE COLLEGE CAN RECEIVE FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND CORPORATIONS</u>

1. Continuous updating of course materials and information--what is, not what was.

2. Recognition that what is being taught at the college level is meaningful and useful to business and industry. Hence, increased philosophical support.

3. Exchange of personnel; i.e., a representative from a local corporation as a lecturer in a regular day class; or (conversely) an instructor speaking to employees at the business location.

4. Funding by the corporations for the tuition and books required for the courses.
5. Opportunities for regular on-campus students and teachers to visit/tour plant and business operations.
6. Additional public exposure through corporation house organs, public relations ties, and meetings.

PRELIMINARY PROCEDURE TO ESTABLISH SUCH A PROGRAM

1. Compile a list of potentially interested participants.
2. Contact the potentially interested organization by letter and explain the objectives and values of such a cooperative program. Be certain to mention that they will be contacted by telephone to discuss the program further.
3. Contact by telephone, reintroducing the subject, and ask for specific questions or suggestions. Ask for an appointment. Stress that the meeting will be a fact-finding discussion.
4. At this point it might be prudent to determine the feasibility of a conference between administrators at the college and those executives who may be involved in such a program. In this way, when the coordinator meets with the corporate individual or team, a conference date might be scheduled.
5. Schedule appointments and generally plan to stay longer than anticipated.
6. Bring appropriate course descriptions. Noe how the classes fit the needs of the industry and whether any modifications can or should be made.
7. Discuss suitable times for the class(es).
8. Discuss on-site classroom facilities.
9. Plan a tentative quarterly schedule to meet the necessary credit hour requirement. (This may vary from one hour to five hour credits.)

10. Discuss the costs involved.

11. Follow-up letter to confirm above procedure.

Since these initial contacts will probably be made months before the actual class(es) begin, it is imperative that immediate follow-up interest is shown. (A simple, brief progress report can always be duplicated and sent at some midpoint of creation.)

NOTE: Many large corporations already have Education Divisions, i.e., Boeing, IBM, State of Washington. However, none that I know of offers academic credit, bona fide, through a college. This can be the opening wedge for partnership.

At BCC, we sent out fifty-one letters to those firms we thought might be receptive to such a cooperative program. The letter stressed that it would be of great help to the program if the College could learn what, if any, specific areas of study would be of interest to them, what times would be most convenient, and what general suggestions might be made for modification and improvement. We received thirty-four positive responses from interested organizations and corporations. Several firms sent out questionnaires to their employees to determine general interest level.

What I share with you here are two steps of the creative phase leading to such an on-site program--1) assessing the general need for such a program, and 2) a procedure to initiate and introduce it. You will, of course, find your own best method of proceding with contracting your instructors and corporations, and determining your fees. These are the obvious implementation steps.

What began at BCC as an exploratory adumbration has now developed into a viable additon to the College's ability to serve its district.

We bagan "Bellevue-in-the-Community-Colelge" three years ago, with the first classes offered spring quarter of that academic year serving 142 students. Last year, we partnered with eleven businesses and industries to serve 1,066 students. As .tate funding becomes more and more tenuous, outreach contract programs such as ours become more and more important as they add not only to the college's commitment to the community but also afford new sources of revenue.

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